

CLAIMS

1. A material handling system comprising:

a beam; a rail at least partially defining a passage; a track within the passage; and a hanger operatively connected to the beam and the rail such that at least a portion of the rail is positioned laterally with respect to the beam.
2. The material handling system of claim 1, wherein the beam includes an upper flange and a lower flange oriented horizontally, and a vertically oriented web interconnecting the upper flange and the lower flange; and wherein the hanger is connected to the upper flange.
3. The material handling system of claim 2, wherein the upper flange is characterized by an upper surface and a lower surface; wherein the rail is located on a first side of the web; and wherein a portion of the hanger contacts the lower surface of the upper flange on a second side of the web different from the first side.
4. The material handling system of claim 1, wherein the hanger includes a fastening element operatively connecting the hanger to the beam, and a cantilever portion supporting the rail.
5. The material handling system of claim 4, wherein the beam includes an upper flange and a lower flange oriented horizontally, and a vertically oriented web interconnecting the upper flange and the lower flange; and wherein the fastening element contacts the upper flange.
6. The material handling system of claim 5, wherein the upper flange is characterized by an upper surface and a lower surface; wherein the rail is positioned on a first side of the web; and wherein a portion of the

hanger contacts the lower surface of the upper flange on a second side of the
 5 web different from the first side.

7. The material handling apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a trolley at least partially located within the passage and having at least one wheel rotatably engaged with the track.

8. A method of retrofitting a material handling system having a horizontally-oriented beam defining an exposed track, the method comprising:

5 connecting a rail to the horizontally-oriented beam such that at least a portion of the rail is positioned laterally with respect to the beam, the rail at least partially defining a passage and a partially enclosed track.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the beam includes an upper flange and a lower flange oriented horizontally, and a vertically oriented web interconnecting the upper flange and the lower flange; and wherein the method further comprises employing a cantilever to support the rail from the
 5 beam.

10. The method of claim 9, further comprising installing a trolley having at least one wheel such that at least a portion of the trolley is located within the passage and said at least one wheel is engaged with the enclosed track such that the trolley is translatable within the passage.

11. A material handling system comprising:

a beam having a horizontally-oriented upper flange, a horizontally-oriented lower flange, and a vertically oriented web
 5 interconnecting the upper flange and the lower flange; a rail at least partially

defining a passage; a track within the passage; and a hanger having a fastening element operatively connecting the hanger to the beam, and a cantilever portion supporting the rail such that at least a portion of the rail is positioned alongside the beam.

12. The material handling system of claim 11, wherein the upper flange is characterized by an upper surface and a lower surface; wherein the rail is positioned on a first side of the web; and wherein the fastening element contacts the lower surface of the upper flange on a second side of the web different from the first side.

13. A hanger for mounting a track rail to a beam, the hanger comprising:

at least one structural member to which the track rail is operatively connectable; and

a fastening element adapted to operatively connect said at least one structural member to the beam so that said at least one structural member projects in a cantilevered manner sufficiently outwardly from the beam such that at least a portion of the track rail may be positioned alongside the beam when the track rail is operatively connected to said at least one structural member.

14. The hanger of claim 13, wherein the beam includes an upper flange, a lower flange, and a vertically-oriented web interconnecting the upper flange and the lower flange, and wherein the fastening element is adapted to engage at least a portion of the upper flange.